

DETAILED ACTION

1. The restriction requirement issued 12 May 2008 has been withdrawn due to applicant's amendments filed in the international stage of the application.

Election/Restrictions

Restriction is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 and 372.

This application contains the following inventions or groups of inventions which are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.

In accordance with 37 CFR 1.499, applicant is required, in reply to this action, to elect a single invention to which the claims must be restricted.

Group I, claim(s) 1-15 are drawn to a device comprising the special technical feature of measuring a binding of a first partner to an interaction to a second partner.

Group II, claim(s) 16-27 are drawn to a method comprising the special technical feature of measuring the binding of a first partner in an interaction to a second partner.

2. The inventions listed as Groups I and II do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons: the application contains method and product claims to more than one of the combinations of inventions as set forth by 37 CFR 1.475.

According to 37 CFR 1.475 regarding unity of invention:

(a) An international and a national stage application shall relate to one invention only or to a group of inventions so linked as to form a single general inventive concept ("requirement of unity of invention"). Where a group of inventions is claimed in an application, the requirement of unity of invention shall be fulfilled only when there is a technical relationship among those inventions involving one or more of the same or corresponding special technical features. The expression "special technical features" shall mean those technical features that define a contribution which each of the claimed inventions, considered as a whole, makes over the prior art.

(b) An international or a national stage application containing claims to different categories of invention will be considered to have unity of invention if the claims are drawn only to one of the following combinations of categories:

(1) A product and a process specially adapted for the manufacture of said product; or

(2) A product and a process of use of said product; or

(3) A product, a process specially adapted for the manufacture of the said product, and a use of the said product; or

(4) A process and an apparatus or means specifically designed for carrying out the said process; or

(5) A product, a process specially adapted for the manufacture of the said product, and an

apparatus or means specifically designed for carrying out the said process.

3. Unity of invention exists only when there is a technical relationship among the claimed inventions involving one or more special technical features. The term "special technical features" is defined as meaning those technical features that define a contribution with each of the inventions considered as a whole, makes over the prior art. The determination is made based on the contents of the claims as interpreted in light of the description and drawings.

4. Applicants are allowed at most one product, one method of making and one method of using in a single general inventive concept. However, the product and method of using of groups I and II do not form a general inventive concept because they do not share a special technical feature over the prior art. Krutzik et al. (US 7,141,416) teach a device for measuring the binding of a first partner in an interaction to a second partner, the device comprising: an opaque temperature controlled chamber having a rotor therein (disc drive assembly is a chamber that contains an optical bio-disc, col. 3, lines 56-60; optical bio-disc is a rotor being a CD, CD-R or DVD, col. 3, lines 39-41; disc drive assembly can control temperature because incubation time and temperature information are recorded on the disc which is read by the disc drive assembly, col. 3,

lines 44-47), the rotor having at the periphery at least one radially positioned transparent reaction well (flow channel with immobilized capture agents, col. 3, lines 26-38; reaction well is transparent, col. 7, lines 28-32), the reaction well having an aperture for the addition of reagents on the upper surface (inlet ports, 122, Fig. 2; col. 7, lines 20-24) and an internal surface having at least one attachment zone for the second interaction partner (col. 3, lines 26-38); a stationary system for detecting light emitted by an indicator molecule (col. 2, lines 56-58 and col. 3, lines 17-25); and means for controlling the temperature of the chamber (col. 3, lines 41-50) and operation of the rotor (col. 4, lines 1-5). Therefore the product and product of using do not share a corresponding special technical feature over the prior art.

SPECIES ELECTION

5. This application contains claims directed to more than one species of the generic invention. These species are deemed to lack unity of invention because they are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.

The species are as follows:

Group A - if group II is elected above, one of the following species must also be elected. The species are drawn to a rotor rotating speed, selected from: up to 500 rpm and greater than 500 rpm.

Group B - if group II is elected above, one of the following species must also be elected. The species are drawn to an indicator molecule, selected from: an intercalating dye and a derivatised antibody.

Applicant is required, in reply to this action, to elect a single species to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. The reply must also identify the claims readable on the elected species, including any claims subsequently added. An argument that a claim is allowable or that all claims are generic is considered non-responsive unless accompanied by an election.

Upon the allowance of a generic claim, applicant will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which are written in dependent form or otherwise include all the limitations of an allowed generic claim as provided by 37 CFR 1.141. If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which are readable upon the elected species. MPEP § 809.02(a).

The following claim(s) are generic: 1 and 16.

6. The species listed above do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, the species lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons: the rotor speeds of group A cannot coexist and the indicator molecules of group B are structurally different.

Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include (i) an election of a species or invention to be examined even though the requirement may be traversed (37 CFR 1.143) and (ii) identification of the claims encompassing the elected invention.

The election of an invention or species may be made with or without traverse. To preserve a right to petition, the election must be made with traverse. If the reply does

not distinctly and specifically point out supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election shall be treated as an election without traverse.

1. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

2. The examiner has required restriction between product and process claims. Where applicant elects claims directed to the product, and the product claims are subsequently found allowable, withdrawn process claims that depend from or otherwise require all the limitations of the allowable product claim will be considered for rejoinder. All claims directed to a nonelected process invention must require all the limitations of an allowable product claim for that process invention to be rejoined.

In the event of rejoinder, the requirement for restriction between the product claims and the rejoined process claims will be withdrawn, and the rejoined process claims will be fully examined for patentability in accordance with 37 CFR 1.104. Thus, to be allowable, the rejoined claims must meet all criteria for patentability including the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 101, 102, 103 and 112. Until all claims to the elected product are found allowable, an otherwise proper restriction requirement between product claims and process claims may be maintained. Withdrawn process claims that are not commensurate in scope with an allowable product claim will not be rejoined. See MPEP § 821.04(b). Additionally, in order to retain the right to rejoinder in accordance with the

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above policy, applicant is advised that the process claims should be amended during prosecution to require the limitations of the product claims. **Failure to do so may result in a loss of the right to rejoinder.** Further, note that the prohibition against double patenting rejections of 35 U.S.C. 121 does not apply where the restriction requirement is withdrawn by the examiner before the patent issues. See MPEP § 804.01. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to MELANIE YU whose telephone number is (571)272-2933. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Long Le can be reached on (571) 272-0823. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Melanie Yu/
Patent Examiner, Art Unit 1641